

Serial No.: 09/598,890

48. The supply element combined with a laboratory microchip of claim 47, further comprising a fourth supplier to transfer the potential to the microchip, said fourth supplier being arranged to be coupled to the corresponding second supplier on the microchip.

49. The supply element combined with a laboratory microchip of claim 47, further comprising first and second assemblies, said first assembly being adapted to contain a module carrying said supply element and supply equipment and said module being adapted to be releasably connected to said second assembly. 112 how can supply element
comprise itself

50. The supply element combined with a laboratory microchip of claim 47, wherein said seal of said at least one third supplier is adapted to be pierced by an end of said first supplier to enable said substance to be transferred from said at least one third supplier to the first supplier of the microchip.

51. A method of operating a supply element combined with a laboratory microchip, the method comprising:

providing the laboratory microchip with a microfluid structure adapted for at least one of chemical, physical, or biological processing;

supplying substances to the microchip with a first supplier;

supplying a potential to the microchip with a second supplier to move substances corresponding to the microfluid structure;

containing a substance in at least one substance-containing third supplier;

opening a seal in said at least one third supplier to the microchip in response to the supply element and the microchip being joined together; and

transferring said substance from said at least one third supplier to the first supplier of the microchip.

52. The method of claim 51, wherein opening said seal comprises opening a seal comprising a chemically resistant substance.

Serial No.: 09/598,890

53. The method of claim 51, further comprising sealing at least one end of at least one third supplier with a membrane that is flush with a side surface of the supply element.

54. The method of claim 53, wherein sealing at least one end of at least one third supplier with a membrane comprises sealing with a membrane comprising a chemically resistant material.

55. The method of claim 53, wherein sealing at least one end of at least one third supplier with a membrane comprises sealing with a membrane comprising one of a metal or a gas-permeable polymer.--